

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)**

### **American Serbia and Montenegro Youth Leadership Exchange (A-SMYLE) Program**

ECA/PE/C/PY-12-12

*Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs  
Office of Citizen Exchanges  
Youth Programs Division*

The POGI applies specifically to the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) issued by the Youth Programs Division, Office of Citizen Exchanges, for a 2013-2014 academic year high school exchange program for Serbia and Montenegro. Proposals must conform to the RFGP, the Guidelines in this document, and the Standard Guidelines outlined in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to such guidelines will be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the guidelines in the PSI and the program specific language in the RFGP and POGI, the RFGP is to be the dominant reference.

## **I. STATEMENT OF WORK**

The A-SMYLE Program provides secondary school students from Serbia and Montenegro the opportunity to live with American families and attend accredited American high schools where they will experience life firsthand in an American host community during the 2013-2014 academic year. Students from Serbia and Montenegro have the opportunity to explore youth leadership, civic responsibility, community activism, democracy, and American society, as well as educate Americans about their country and culture. Students take part in leadership development activities, civic education, and community service during the U.S. program and participate in alumni activities as they apply their experiences in the United States to their lives at home. Funding is also intended to sponsor activities in local U.S. host communities that will enhance the students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding a democratic and civil society. Support for alumni projects after their return home is also an essential element of this Cooperative Agreement. Information about the A-SMYLE Program can be found at: [http://exchanges.state.gov/youth/programs/a\\_smyle/index.html](http://exchanges.state.gov/youth/programs/a_smyle/index.html)

### **Organization Responsibilities and Oversight**

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the Department of State is the designated Exchange Visitor Program (J-visa) sponsor with ultimate responsibility for the A-SMYLE Program. Any Organization (including their officers, employees, representatives, agents, volunteers, and third parties) involved in the administration of the A-SMYLE Program receiving an A-SMYLE Program Cooperative Agreement will be considered under the terms of such Cooperative Agreement to be "third parties cooperating with or assisting the sponsor."

The actions of recipient organizations shall be "imputed to the sponsor in evaluating the sponsor's compliance with" 22 CFR 62. Therefore, the Bureau expects that any organization receiving an award under this competition will render all assistance necessary to enable the Bureau to fully comply with 22 CFR 62 et seq.

Relevant portions of the regulations governing the administration of an exchange visitor program are set forth in 22 CFR 62.25(d)(15), Program administration: *"Adhere to all regulatory provisions set forth in this Part and all additional terms and conditions governing program administration that the Department may impose."*

### **Responsibilities of Award Recipient**

Responsibilities for this particular program include the following activities:

1. **Consultation:** Meet with the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) at the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade and at the U.S. Embassy in Podgorica within 30 days of the awarding of the Cooperative Agreement. Discuss the geographic and other priorities for recruitment of A-SMYLE students. Maintain an open consultative relationship with OPA at both embassies, as well as with the ECA program office. The organization must have at least monthly contact with OPA personnel regarding recruitment and selection, security, travel, student issues, and/or other matters that may be of concern. This includes informing them of student successes and asking OPA to indicate where it would like to have input or play a role in the program in regard to selection, orientations, and alumni activities.
2. **Overseas infrastructure:** Maintain the appropriate infrastructure in Serbia and Montenegro to carry out the in-country functions of a youth exchange program. The ongoing communications with natural parents, follow-up activities with alumni, and relations with U.S. and foreign government officials all require that the organization maintain a sufficient presence that is satisfactory to ECA and OPA. All on-the-ground operations in Serbia and Montenegro must be staffed in such a way as to ensure that U.S. Embassy personnel are not encumbered by the day-to-day functioning of the program.
3. **Program materials:** Develop program materials that support various components of the program – i.e. recruitment, selection, training, and orientation. Materials may include, but are not limited to promotional handouts, students and school handbooks, and host family resources. Materials must be made available for approval by ECA's Program Office prior to publication and distribution. Please allow additional time for the review process. All official documents and materials developed for promotional purposes must acknowledge the U.S. Department of State's role as program sponsor. Where appropriate, documents will include the State Department seal. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and be allowed to distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit.
4. **Online Presence:** Develop an online A-SMYLE Program webpage that serves to market the program;
5. **Recruitment, screening, and selection of students:** Selection must be managed through a transparent, merit-based competition for eligible applicants from each country. The recipient organization must coordinate initial overall planning with OPA staff at the project's onset

and discuss OPA's involvement in the program. Recruitment and selection must be conducted on the basis of merit and be free of the appearance or perception of political influence and corruption. The recruitment process must be open and transparent, making it possible for any student who meets the eligibility criteria to apply. Application forms used in both countries must be uniform. The aim of the program is to select students who have personal qualities, leadership potential, motivation, and the academic, language and social skills to be successful on the exchange. Maintain recruitment statistics at each stage by country, region, and gender (i.e., initial application, language testing, interviews, selection of finalists and alternates, etc.). A serious effort must be made to recruit students with disabilities and to offer related support services. Selection also includes the selection and training for the application reviewers. All application materials and accompanying documentation must be kept strictly confidential and may not be shared with any organizations or groups not involved with the A-SMYLE Program.

6. **Medical screening:** Arrange in-country medical screenings and clearances to ensure that students are healthy and have immunizations necessary for admission to American schools prior to leaving their home countries when possible. Review medical screening documents in the United States to confirm that all requirements have been met.
7. **Student Likeness (Photos) Usage:** Request permission from each student's natural family to have their photo taken and reproduced in ECA-approved printed and web-based promotional materials.
8. **Travel:** Assist with passports and visas; collaborate with the Bureau program office and the U.S. Embassies in Podgorica and Belgrade on gathering and providing information needed for issuing the DS-2019 and data entry into the SEVIS system. Develop standard travel procedures for all program participants. Recruit and train student escorts (flight leaders) and coordinate travel for students who are for any reason unable to travel with an escorted group, including those who are voluntarily or involuntarily repatriated before the end of the exchange. Flight escorts should be selected primarily on their ability to manage a group of teenage travelers. They should be adequately trained, so as to ensure their competence and independence while traveling.
9. **Host family placements:** Recruit, interview, screen, select, and secure families in the United States who are well motivated and will provide a welcoming home environment for the A-SMYLE students, prior to the students' departures from their home countries. Ensure that families provide three meals per day, bedding and other basic needs that constitute a safe and nurturing environment. Lunch may be one packed by the student with food provided by the host family. Conduct a second host family visit in accordance with J-1 visa regulations.
10. **School placements:** Secure prior **written** acceptance for the enrollment of participants in accredited public or private secondary schools prior to the students' departure from their home country. Funding will generally not be authorized for the payment of school tuition. Home schooling is not an acceptable option. The placement of more than two A-SMYLE students in the same school must be approved in advance by the Youth Programs Division.
11. **Pre-Departure Orientation:** Provide uniform pre-departure orientation to reinforce identity as participants in a U.S. government scholarship program and enable the dissemination of information, policies and procedures critical to the students' success. Allow

time for the U.S. Embassy's OPA to participate. The recipient organization will also provide orientations for the natural parents prior to the students' departure for the U.S. and for the host families.

12. **Staff training** Provide ongoing training of employees and volunteers of the recipient organization, and third parties acting on their behalf, to ensure sensitivity to cross-cultural issues that are unique to this exchange population and effectiveness in preparing the host community on these matters. Provide A-SMYLE Program-specific training and orientation to local coordinators and host families.
13. **International travel:** Arrange round-trip travel from students' homes to their host communities and back. Travel should be arranged in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible in accordance with the Fly America Act. Secure any necessary transit visas.
14. **Support for Disabilities:** Perform a special review, carried out by a medical doctor, to confirm that applicants with disabilities are able to travel and complete the program successfully. The medical doctor will also identify special support needs for each applicant specific to their disability. This information must be conveyed prior to student travel to the U.S. Facilitate communication among all parties to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities are understood, projected financial impact is clear, and accommodations are made available. Recipient organization is responsible for providing accommodations, if needed, for participants with disabilities. See page 9-10: "Program for Students with Disabilities".
15. **U.S. Orientations:** Provide arrival, mid-year, and end-of-year orientations for students that include discussion of the goals of the program, provide the tools necessary for success, deal with adjustment issues (including budgeting and school life and opportunities), examine cross-cultural issues that arise during the program, and prepare for return and participation in alumni programming. ECA encourages arrival orientations of students that take place in Washington, D.C. to give Department of State officials the opportunity to meet and address students. If such orientations are proposed, the recipient organization will coordinate with ECA's Program Office.
16. **On-program support and monitoring:** Provide on-program monitoring of students, host families, and local coordinators to ensure the safety and well-being of the students (see pages 14-15 for details). This includes tracking student activities, such as community service, exemplary achievements and other program-related endeavors; providing supervision, support, counseling, and trouble-shooting for participants, as needed; following students' progress in academics, social adjustment, and overall well-being; report periodically to the Bureau on the status of students. On-program support includes communicating and liaising with the students' natural families during the program year, and providing guidance to students on handling cross-cultural issues and problems independently. A student's family must be informed in a timely manner of problems that arise with the student, including academic deficiencies, behavioral concerns, health and safety issues, transfers to a new host family or school, and any situations that may necessitate early termination from the program.
17. **Enhancement activities:** Through a variety of creative means, provide non-scholastic activities for the participants outside the school setting so that program goals may be fulfilled. This should include conducting outreach to the community to amplify the opportunities for Americans to learn about Serbia and Montenegro; establishing guidelines

for community service requirements; providing education in such areas as citizen participation in government and dealing with community problems (e.g. environmental protection, substance abuse, homelessness); arranging activities that expose participants to and increase their understanding of the diversity that exists in American society; and organizing special events (you may budget for up to one national event or a series of regional events).

18. **Leadership training seminar/activity:** Administer age-appropriate activities that provide hands-on training in leadership development skills. Ensure that local program activities also provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, expose them to models of leadership in various sectors of the community, and offer discussions of leadership issues.
19. **Civic Education Workshop (CEW):** Plan a Civic Education Workshop for approximately 15 A-SMYLE students to take place in Washington, DC in approximately February or March 2014. Design an interactive program focusing on concepts such as citizen empowerment, volunteerism, civic activism, and community action. The program should enable participants to learn firsthand about the federal system of government, observe government institutions, hear about and discuss issues on the federal agenda, and interact with government officials. Include a plan for and implement selection of participants using a transparent, merit-based process to identify CEW finalists and alternates, employing metrics similar to the A-SMYLE selection process. See “Enhancement” section below for more information about Civic Education Week.
20. **Publicity:** Inform the State Department of any publicity involving the students or the program during their exchange, especially when the media are involved. The U.S. Department of State should be cited as the funding source of this exchange program. The recipient organization must ensure that students, host families, schools and placement coordinators who may be interviewed by media are familiar with the overarching goals and objectives of the exchange program.
21. **Alumni:** Provide follow-on activities to facilitate adjustment and ensure that the knowledge and skills gained on the program are reinforced and put to use at home. Proposals should include small grants to enable alumni to apply what they have learned in their home countries through civic education projects and community development initiatives. Proposals must provide a clear, systematic plan for alumni tracking. Data must be maintained in a way that will enable the organization to provide information to the ECA program office on participants, including name, home address, host school name and address, and host family name and address, in a format compatible with ECA’s database systems. Upon return, the recipient organization will introduce alumni to the existing A-SMYLE alumni associations in each country, so returnees can join and participate in alumni association activities. This includes activities such as support for recruitment, peer support, and community service. Collaboration with established, in-country youth organizations is encouraged. Please refer to the Proposal Submissions Instruction (PSI) document for additional guidance.
22. **Information management:** Track applicants through the initial stages of recruitment and through their selection as finalists, placement, and travel. Prepare and electronically transmit data needed for the Bureau program office to issue DS-2019 forms, allowing ample time for visa processing. Data on students must be submitted in an Excel spreadsheet that will be

provided by ECA. Share alphabetical lists of finalists and alternates by country of origin and by U.S. state, and provide customized reports requested on a case-by-case basis during the year. Information needed to generate these reports may include but is not limited to participant name; gender; natural parents' names; home address and telephone (where it exists); home school and address; host families' names, address and telephone; recipient organization name and location; and host school name and address. The database should be regularly maintained and updated, in order that reports generated contain accurate information. A procedure should be in place to obtain timely updates from the recipient organization when the host family, school, or airport information changes.

23. **Accident and Sickness Insurance:** The Bureau offers the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) plan for students participating in the program. Detailed information on ASPE can be found in 10 FAM 240: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/88250.pdf>. An applicant wishing to use a different plan must demonstrate that such alternative plan a) provides comparable or more comprehensive coverage and b) costs less. Premiums for private plans may be included as a funded line item. **Coverage must begin when students depart their home countries and not conclude until they return home.** If using its own insurance policy, the applicant must include a copy of the policy with their proposal submission.
24. **Fiscal management:** Ensure sound fiscal management of and accounting for grant funding, as required by federal law, including cost-sharing and funds provided to any approved sub-recipient organizations.
25. **Student issues:** Prepare detailed documentation regarding student support issues. Report serious problems or controversies and incidents or allegations involving the actual or alleged sexual exploitation or abuse of an exchange student participant to the Bureau (and local law enforcement, if required by law). Report any situation that impacts the safety, health or well-being of A-SMYLE participants. Documentation should include communication with the student, host family, and natural family. The recipient organization must report all serious student problems to ECA in accordance with the J-1 visa regulations, and request ECA's concurrence prior to the student's travel in the case that a student is to be repatriated early. Approval to repatriate a student will depend on consistent and thorough documentation that ensures that all persons are aware of the situation and have been involved in its resolution. In the case that termination of a student's program is recommended, only the Bureau can officially terminate a student from the program and make the decision to repatriate the student.
26. **Evaluation:** Develop and implement a program evaluation plan in order to monitor and assess the success, effectiveness, and impact of the program. Submit quarterly reports to share A-SMYLE Program outcomes. Prepare a final program performance report.

### **Detailed Guidance Related to Responsibilities Listed Above**

#### **1. Host Families**

*Recipient Organizations' practices and procedures for recruiting, screening, and selecting host families and placing A-SMYLE participants with host families must meet the Exchange Visitor Program regulations for the secondary school student category, i.e., 22 CFR 62.25.*

With respect to the placement of A-SMYLE participants, the Office of Citizen Exchanges provides the following further guidance that the recipient organization must follow in placing students with host families:

- Recipient Organizations must repeat the entire screening process annually for host families, even if they have previously hosted.
- All potential host families must fill out the Host Family Application and Host Family Agreement. The Recipient Organization headquarters staff must ensure such documents are complete. Refer to 22 CFR 62 Appendix F for host family application requirements.
- All potential host families must be interviewed in person by the local coordinator in the host family home. The local coordinator conducting the interview must tour the home, see exactly where the student will be sleeping, and confirm that the exchange student has a bed to him/herself.
- Organization headquarters staff and local coordinators must ensure that all A-SMYLE participant host family placements are in full compliance with Exchange Visitor Program regulations, the standards set forth herein, and the standards established by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) , and that the host family and home environment are acceptable for a A-SMYLE student.
- The local coordinator (or permanent staff) must conduct reference checks for all potential host family members, and a full-time permanent headquarters employee of the A-SMYLE Recipient Organization must review and evaluate the sufficiency of reference checks and keep a record indicating that the record checks were completed.
- Neither the employees, volunteers, nor third parties acting on the behalf of an A-SMYLE recipient organization nor persons related to potential host families by blood or marriage may serve as character references.
- The organization should include a description of how they will conduct the second host family visit in the proposal within the first 30-60 days of the student's arrival. Host families must provide students three meals per day, their own beds, and other basic provisions necessary to ensure a safe and nurturing environment. Lunch may be packed by the student with food provided by the host family. Except on an occasional basis, it is not acceptable for the A-SMYLE participants to purchase their own food.
- A recipient organization must complete all host family double placement documentation prior to the students' departures from their home countries, and maintain copies that must be sent upon request.
- A recipient organization must obtain (and retain for three years) copies of the following documents for each Program participant:

- Name/photo page of international passport
- J-1 visa page in passport
- I-94 with date of U.S. entry indicated
- DS-2019 with stamp issued at U.S. port of entry

## 2. Host Schools

*A recipient organization's practices and procedures for placing A-SMYLE participants in accredited public or private secondary educational institutions must meet the Exchange Visitor Program regulations for the secondary school student category, i.e., 22 CFR 62.25.*

With respect to the placement of A-SMYLE participants, the Office of Citizen Exchanges provides the following further guidance that a recipient organization must follow in placing students in host schools:

- Recipient organization should work with host schools to secure their cooperation in providing academic programs appropriate to the needs and abilities of the individual students.
- Recipient organization should encourage school administrators to utilize students as resources in the classroom and the community, including discussing options for extra-curricular activities that correlate with Program goals (e.g., Student Council, Junior Achievement, Future Business Leaders of America, volunteer opportunities).
- Recipient organization should encourage students to take English, American History/Government, and/or Economics courses, even if they are not required courses.
- Due to unique cultural sensitivities, ECA must provide its concurrence before students may be placed in religious, private, charter, and non-traditional public schools. Home schooling is not an acceptable option. The following information must be provided with a request for ECA's approval for such placement:
  - Name and location of school, and confirmation that it is fully accredited.
  - Impact on programming: Explain how you will ensure that the placement will not interfere with participation in regular A-SMYLE enhancement activities.
  - Concurrence of student and natural family.
  - Cost arrangement: Note tuition waiver or payment details.

## 3. Insurance

The Bureau offers the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) plan for students participating in the program. Detailed information on ASPE can be found in 10 FAM 240: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/88250.pdf>. A recipient organization wishing to use a different plan must demonstrate that such alternate plan a) provides comparable or more comprehensive coverage and b) costs less. **Coverage must begin when students depart their home countries and not conclude until they return home.** Please keep in mind that students with disabilities who participate in the July post-arrival workshop must be covered by the recipient organization's health insurance policy while they are participating in the workshop. **If**



**using its own insurance policy, applicant must include a copy of the policy with its proposal submission.**

#### **4. Program for Students with Disabilities**

The A-SMYLE Program will recruit for one finalist with a disability to participate in two workshops that are organized by a separate organization. The student should be selected through a process that takes their specific disability into account, but they are expected to meet the same criteria as those of the students without disabilities. The student will also have additional support, provided by the organization responsible for the Disability Components Program. The elements of the Disability Component include:

***Preparatory Workshop:*** Students with disabilities will participate in a week-long, post-arrival Preparatory Workshop, conducted by the organization responsible for the Disability Component of the Project. The recipient organization will be required to fund and arrange the domestic travel of any student with a disability to and from the preparatory workshop.

The elements of the Disability Component include:

- Thoroughly assessing each student's condition and specific needs during the Preparatory Workshop and providing a report on the assessment to the recipient organization.
- Facilitating and funding transportation of the students from the Preparatory Workshop to their permanent host communities.
- Providing the recipient organization with support and resources throughout the year.

***Independence Program:*** Once the A-SMYLE student with a disability arrives in his or her permanent host community, the recipient organization is responsible for implementing an Independence Program as follows:

- Using the student assessment, the program should include activities that help the students get around on their own, do homework, do chores, use public transportation, practice using new equipment, and other similar activities.
- If the student with disabilities has not been identified as needing independence training, the recipient organization has the option of arranging other types of enhancements or community activities during this period before school begins. This may include the involvement of peers from the local school who can help with the student's acculturation. This student may not have attended mainstream classes before, so having an opportunity to interact with peers without disabilities will be important in preparing for school.
- The recipient organization must include a report detailing their Independence Program and the students' individual progress in their first Quarterly Report.

***Leadership and Re-entry Workshop:*** After having enjoyed the accessibility and other disability support available in the United States, an A-SMYLE student with a disability may not be

prepared to return to home country environments that may be less disability-friendly. Therefore, the Disability Component organization will conduct a two-day Leadership and Re-entry Workshop in order to facilitate readjustment of the A-SMYLE participant to less disability-friendly environments.

The workshop will cover the following topics:

- Leadership development and empowerment skills;
- Introduction of outreach tools to enable students to work in support of disability rights in their home countries.
- Potential readjustment issues and solutions for a person with a disability returning to a less disability-friendly environment.

For this workshop, transportation and other logistics will be arranged by the disability component organization in conjunction with the placement award recipient.

A recipient organization must include reports detailing any student with a disability and the student's individual progress in their first Quarterly Report.

Participation in both the Preparatory Workshop and a Spring Leadership Re-entry Workshop for Students with Disabilities is mandatory for all students in this category.

## **5. Host Family and Staff/Volunteer Training**

The recipient organization will conduct an in-person A-SMYLE-specific orientation for all screened and selected host families and provide them with the information and reference materials necessary to host and support a A-SMYLE student prior to the students' placement in their homes. (Note: previous interviews during the screening and selecting process do not constitute this A-SMYLE-specific orientation.) The recipient organization's headquarters staff may not permit the placement of an A-SMYLE student in a home until this orientation has been completed.

The A-SMYLE Program Office in ECA recommends that orientations for families hosting A-SMYLE participants not include other non-A-SMYLE host families, to ensure that adequate attention is given to A-SMYLE-related issues. A-SMYLE host family orientations must include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- J-visa requirements and why it is important for students to return home at the end of the year to complete their two year home residency requirement;
- The toll-free number host families and A-SMYLE participants may use to contact the Department of State;
- Communication with recipient organization personnel, including emergency contact information;
- The Disability Components Program;

- The specific goals and objectives of A-SMYLE, and differences between A-SMYLE and other government-sponsored or private exchange programs;
- Geographic and cultural nuances and their impact on student behavior (e.g., family composition, food, study habits, manners);
- \$300 incidentals allowance and \$125 monthly student stipend (i.e., their purposes and disbursement);

Guidance: Orientations should provide examples for host families on the use of these funds. The incidentals allowance is intended to offset school related expenses such as yearbook fees, school activity fees, or extra-curricular activity equipment. The allowance is not intended for the purchase of electronics or cell phones. Host families are not required to provide these items for their host students. The monthly student stipend may be used to cover expenses for making American friends or to pay for personal items such as toiletries. The stipend should not be used for electronics, clothing, travel, or to pay for school lunches. Host families must provide three meals a day including lunch during school.

- Schedule of cluster/enhancement activities, including a Calendar of Events;
- Policies regarding travel and natural family visits;
- Community service requirements;
- International Education Week;
- Counseling and discipline procedures;
- Rules the exchange visitors are required to follow under the sponsor's program;
- Family and student expectations;
- Opportunities for A-SMYLE students during the year, such as the Civic Education Workshop, Global Youth Service Day, online State Department Web chats, etc.; and
- Alumni programming.

***Staff/Volunteer Training and Orientation:*** The recipient organization is responsible for conducting A-SMYLE-specific training for all their employees, volunteers, and third parties acting on their behalf who are involved in the program. This training should be designed to provide the methods and tools necessary for monitoring and counseling A-SMYLE students, their host families, and school personnel. The recipient organization must implement a national training program for key staff involved in supervising and training other employees, volunteers, or third parties who administer the A-SMYLE placements. The recipient organization should invite the A-SMYLE Program Office at ECA to participate in the national training program.

***Training and Monitoring Employees and Volunteers of Recipient organizations and Third Parties Acting on Their Behalf:*** Recipient organizations' practices and procedures for training and monitoring their officers, employees, and volunteers, and third parties acting on their behalf

*who are involved in the administration of A-SMYLE must meet the Exchange Visitor Program regulations for the secondary school student category, i.e., 22 CFR 62.25(d)(1-2).*

With respect to the training and monitoring of the employees and volunteers of the recipient organization and the third parties acting on their behalf, the Office of Citizen Exchanges provides the following further guidance:

- Sponsors must ensure that all organizational officers, employees, representatives, agents, and volunteers acting on their behalf are adequately trained and supervised and that any such person in direct personal contact with exchange students has been vetted through a criminal background check.
- The recipient organization is responsible for conducting A-SMYLE Program-specific training for all their employees, volunteers, and third parties acting on their behalf who are involved in the program. This training should be designed to provide the methods and tools necessary for monitoring and counseling A-SMYLE students, their host families, and school personnel.
- A recipient organization must implement a national training program for key staff involved in supervising and training other employees, volunteers, or third parties who administer the A-SMYLE placements. A recipient organization should invite the A-SMYLE Program Office to participate in the national training program.
- All local coordinators working with A-SMYLE students will fill out a local coordinator application.
- Full-time permanent employee(s) or an official representative of the recipient organization will interview and train all local coordinators.
- 22 CFR 62.25(d)(1): “In addition to their own training, sponsors must ensure that all local coordinators must complete the Department of State mandated training module prior to their appointment as a local coordinator or assumption of duties.” For a non-designated recipient organization, the Department of State will coordinate this requirement.
- Full-time permanent employee(s) or an official designate of the A-SMYLE recipient organization will have substantive monthly contact with all local coordinators, in-person, via digital video conference, or by telephone. Logs should be kept of these contacts and made available to ECA upon request. At a minimum, such logs must include the following information: Names of the Local Coordinators, their managing Regional Coordinators (if any) and the A-SMYLE Program students for whom they are responsible; the name and position of the full-time permanent employee(s) of the recipient organization; the date and method of the contact; and a short, but comprehensive summary of the topics covered. Such narratives must be sufficient to substantiate the current well-being of A-SMYLE participants. Proposals that outline effective and creative methods of ensuring substantive contact with local coordinators will be deemed more competitive.

## **6. Post-arrival orientation for participants**

*Recipient organizations' practices and procedures for the A-SMYLE student orientation must meet the general Exchange Visitor Program regulations and the secondary school student category-specific orientation requirements, i.e., 22 CFR 62.25(g).*

With respect to the post-arrival orientations of A-SMYLE participants, the Office of Citizen Exchanges requires that a recipient organization prepare materials for and conduct an A-SMYLE-specific post-arrival orientation program. The following topics must be included as part of post-arrival orientation:

- Goals of the A-SMYLE Program;
- Rules, regulations, and expectations;
- The toll-free number students may use to contact the Department of State;
- Role of the local representative;
- Personal goals;
- Keys to a successful exchange experience;
- School life and academic opportunities and expectations;
- Schedule of upcoming events and activities;
- Community service;
- International Education Week (November);
- Cultural misunderstandings and sensitive topics (e.g., attitude/gratitude, personal hygiene, religion);
- Computer etiquette and usage;
- Student opportunities, including those offered through the A-SMYLE Program (i.e. Civic Education Workshop, Global Youth Service Day);
- Budgeting  
Guidance: Orientations should clearly cover the intent of the \$125 monthly student stipend. The stipend may be used to cover expenses for making American friends (e.g., movies, occasional meals, bowling) or to pay for personal items such as toiletries. The stipend is not intended to be saved to take home or be used for electronics, clothing, travel, or to pay for school lunches. Students who wish to purchase these items may accept occasional jobs such as babysitting or yard work, as stated in 22 CFR 62.25(i), "Exchange students may not be employed on either a full or part-time basis but may accept sporadic or intermittent employment such as babysitting or yard work."
- Communication with friends and family at home; and
- A brief overview of alumni activities that will await returning participants.

## **7. Participant Monitoring**

*Recipient organizations' practices and procedures for monitoring A-SMYLE participants must meet the Exchange Visitor Program regulations for the secondary school student category, i.e., 22 CFR 62.25.*

With respect to the monitoring of A-SMYLE participants, the Office of Citizen Exchanges provides the following further guidance that a recipient organization must follow:

- Only the Office of Citizen Exchanges can make the decision to terminate and repatriate a student; under no circumstances will a recipient organization, their employees, volunteers, or third parties acting on their behalf inform A-SMYLE participants or imply to them that their programs will terminate or that they will be repatriated, without specific directions from the Office of Citizen Exchanges.
- Local coordinators will monitor students' progress in academics, social adjustment, and activities such as community service, exemplary achievements, and other program-related endeavors and track their progress in the local coordinators' monthly contact reports.
- Local coordinators will identify the need for additional student support, arrange counseling for participants, document the circumstances, and notify full-time permanent employees of the recipient organization who will, when necessary, gain natural parent perspective or concurrence and notify the Program Office. If the situation leads to an early return request, the recipient organization should provide consistent and thorough documentation that ensures that the involved students, host families, and natural families are aware of the situation and have been included in its resolution. All foreign and domestic recruitment and placement partners must concur. The recipient organization will prepare a clear and concise report of the circumstances detailing communication between parties. The report will be shared, when necessary, with ECA.

Full-time permanent employee(s) or an official designate of the recipient organization will develop and implement plans to monitor all student placements (e.g., participants and host families) in addition to the monthly contact required by the regulations. Among other things, the monitoring plan must ensure that:

- Full-time permanent employee(s) or an official designate of the recipient organization's headquarters must conduct site visits to the homes of at least 20% or ten, whichever is greater, of the A-SMYLE students placed by their organizations. The purpose of these visits is to see the A-SMYLE students in their host environments. The visits should cover a combination of clustered and non-clustered students. These site visits should be conducted in close coordination with the Bureau to complement Program Office site visits and ensure maximum coverage.
- The recipient organization should submit site visit plans to ECA through the on program support email box provided to award recipients. Site visit plans for post-arrival-December should be submitted by September 30, 2013. Site visit plans for January-June should be submitted by December 31, 2013.

- Full-time permanent employee(s) or an official designate of the recipient organization will develop reporting systems to distribute and collect monthly updates, reports, and other communications that students will fill out and submit to the organization's headquarters themselves. The type of system is left to the discretion of the recipient organization. Systems that demonstrate effectiveness and efficiency in identifying student issues will be deemed more competitive. Additionally, plans that describe ways to attain 100% student participation will be deemed more competitive. The purpose of these student reported monthly updates is to allow A-SMYLE students to self report issues and to allow the recipient organization to track these issues effectively. The recipient organization must promptly notify ECA's Program Office about problems, inconsistencies, or concerns that are identified from these updates.

## 8. Reporting Obligations

*Recipient organizations, their officers, employees, and third parties acting on their behalf must meet both the general Exchange Visitor Program reporting requirements and the secondary school student category-specific reporting requirements, , i.e., 22 CFR 62.13, 22 CFR 62.25, 22 CFR 62.70.*

The Office of Citizen Exchanges provides the following further guidance on reporting that the recipient organization must follow:

- The recipient organization will interpret "Department" in the above-referenced reporting regulations to mean both the Office of Citizen Exchanges and the Private Sector Programs Division of the Office of Designation. That is, the recipient organization must advise both Department contacts of any matter that is required to be reported by a sponsor pursuant to the above regulations.
- The recipient organization must provide the Office of Citizen Exchanges with reports of all situations that impact the safety, health, or well-being of A-SMYLE participants.
- The recipient organization is required to enter complete, accurate, and up-to-date placement information into an A-SMYLE web-based database, including host family and local coordinator changes that may occur during the year, **within 48 hours of the time that the change took place.**
- The recipient organization must promptly notify the Office of Citizen Exchanges about problems, inconsistencies, or concerns that are identified from these updates.
- The recipient organization shall promptly notify the Office of Citizen Exchanges of any developments that have a significant impact on the award-supported activities.
- The recipient organization must complete all placements by August 31, 2013.
- The recipient organization must report on the outcome of the second host family visits in the Fall quarterly report.
- The recipient organization must provide the Office of Citizen Exchanges with an electronic report of all situations which resulted in the placement of an exchange student

with more than one host family or in more than one school. This report is due by July 31 for the previous academic school year.

- In a timely fashion, the recipient organization must distribute to all A-SMYLE students information that the Office of Citizen Exchanges provides regarding Department-initiated A-SMYLE Program activities. Such activities include: International Education Week, Civic Education Workshop, Global Youth Service Day, and ad-hoc program-related activities that may arise during the year (e.g., online chats, meetings, briefings).
- All promotional materials must identify the A-SMYLE Program as a U.S. Department of State-sponsored program.
- In a timely manner, the recipient organization must inform the Office of Citizen Exchanges of any publicity that highlights students or the A-SMYLE Program in a positive light or otherwise strengthens outreach efforts, particularly the publicity that involves government officials and the media. When the media interact with A-SMYLE students, the recipient organization should make every effort to identify the A-SMYLE Program as a U.S. Department of State-sponsored program.

## **9. Enhancements**

***Leadership Development Programs:*** It is highly recommended that the recipient organization earmark a portion of the \$400 per student enhancement activities fund for specialized training for the development of leadership skills such as public speaking, team-building, critical thinking, and goal-setting so that the students are prepared to apply these skills once they return to their home countries. Proposed training should explore issues that foster civic responsibility, tolerance, public service, and conflict resolution and management. The recipient organization is encouraged to interact with reputable, local youth groups and to use free resources.

The recipient organization is also encouraged to provide scholarships to enable A-SMYLE students to participate in local and national leadership trainings, such as the Annual National Service-Learning Conference, Youth Noise Summits, and Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership (HOBY) Seminars.

***Cultural Enhancement Programs:*** The recipient organization is required to conduct Cultural Enhancement Programs during the academic year to increase the participants' understanding of American culture, values, and history. These activities should expose students to and increase their understanding of key elements of American civil society and foster dialogue and enduring ties between the students and their host communities. The recipient organization may do this in conjunction with other ECA-sponsored students. The other ECA-funded programs include students with the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX), Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES), and Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) programs. Applicants must include a schedule of proposed enhancement activities for the 2013-2014 academic year in their Program Narrative.



Enhancement activities must be educational in nature. Funding should be expended in small increments throughout the year to encourage a variety of activities. Please note the emphasis on providing activities that promote youth leadership development. Activities that are designed to provide students the opportunity for community and public service are valuable, as they promote an understanding of the role volunteering has in America and enable students to give something back to their host communities. ECA recommends that the recipient organization provide incentives for such participation through awards, contests, and acknowledgments in newsletters and on websites. Clearly explain how training strategies, dissemination of information, enhancement activities and orientations will be organized and conducted during the program year for all students. Enhancement activities should expose participants to and increase their understanding of the diversity that exists in American society. There is a maximum of \$400 per student to cover the cost of these activities. Enhancement funds may not be spent on packaged sightseeing trips. Enhancement programs should include debrief sessions so participants can discuss what they have experienced.

Funds for educational materials for educational materials used to supplement leadership development may be requested; these costs should appear as a separate line item in the budget. The proposal should also provide details as to how educational materials will be used during the year.

***Community Service Requirements:*** All A-SMYLE students are required to participate in community service activities. The recipient organization is expected to provide participants and their host families with clear and precise guidelines that reflect the standards, requirements, and expectations of their organizations, including but not limited to the following:

- Minimum number of hours and type (e.g., volunteer work or other tasks) of required community service. Examples of other tasks include writing essays about the impact community service activities have had on students, taking photographs of or corresponding with individuals who benefited from the student's efforts;
- Method by which the recipient organization will monitor community service;
- Consequences of failing to meet this obligation; and
- Incentives, if any, to engage in community service.

Costs associated with implementing community service activities should appear in a separate line item in the budget.

### ***Civic Education Workshop***

The recipient organization is responsible for developing and conducting a Civic Education Workshop (CEW) for approximately 15 A-SMYLE students in the Spring of 2014. The recipient organization will also be responsible for coordinating roundtrip travel arrangements for each participant from his/her host community to Washington, D.C., and for providing room and board for students during their time in Washington. Ground transportation should be provided for

participants in the D.C. area, including to and from Washington area airports. The recipient organization must be amenable to working with the Department of State and the Bureau in arranging certain briefings and visits, as the opportunity arises.

CEW should be arranged for seven days, including arrival and departure, during a time when Congress is in session. Program components should include sessions on U.S. domestic and foreign policy, the role of the media in a civil society, citizen empowerment, volunteerism and community activism, and federalism. The workshop may also provide opportunities to attend cultural events and visit museums and monuments. Include a description of the ways in which all students will be encouraged to share what they have learned, both in their U.S. host communities and when they return to their home countries. Also, provide a mechanism for evaluation of CEW in terms of its impact on the students and in fulfilling objectives. Costs associated with implementing CEW should appear in a separate section in the budget.

#### **10. Mid-Year Orientation**

The recipient organization must arrange a mid-year orientation to meet with all A-SMYLE participants approximately halfway through their exchange programs, preferably in January. The purpose of this meeting is to assess their progress in achieving program and personal goals and provide the necessary assistance to enable them to meet these goals. The issues to discuss must include, at a minimum, the following:

- Satisfaction with host family placement;
- Adjustment and cross-cultural concerns;
- Challenges and strategies to deal with these issues;
- Identification of program and personal goals, progress in achieving these goals, and strategy for achieving these goals;
- Return travel (e.g., deciding on a return date, travel procedures, luggage, and overweight baggage costs);
- Global Youth Service Day (April); and
- Alumni programming (e.g., alumni associations, ideas for alumni activities, and registering on the DOS Alumni website).

#### **11. Re-entry Training**

The recipient organization is responsible for preparing students for bringing closure to their American exchange experiences as well as re-entry to their home countries. The recipient organization must ensure that students receive relevant information concerning A-SMYLE alumni opportunities in their respective countries and discuss individual plans for possible alumni projects. The following points should be included as part of re-entry training:

- Closure – preparing to leave and saying goodbye:
  - The importance of keeping in contact with host families and American friends;
- Re-entry – expectations and challenges:

- How families will treat returning exchange students,
- How friends will treat returning exchange students, and
- Stages of reverse culture shock and techniques for coping;
- Changes:
  - How the exchange students' home countries have changed in the past year,
  - How the exchange students have changed in the past year, and
  - How the exchange students' goals have changed in the past year;
- Connecting with A-SMYLE alumni:
  - Identifying new skills that can help A-SMYLE participant alumni, and
  - Ideas for possible alumni activities;
- Teaching people at home about the United States; and
- J-1 Visa two-year home residency requirement.

## 12. Performance Reports

***Quarterly Performance Reports:*** The recipient organization is responsible for implementing mechanisms for monitoring participants and reporting to the program officer on A-SMYLE Program success and impact on a quarterly basis throughout the year. They must submit quarterly performance reports that address, at a minimum, the following topics: past and planned program activities; financial status (i.e., identify financial variations from original budgets); and the strengths and weaknesses of the recipient organization's overall experience with A-SMYLE as well as individual participants. Such program descriptions should be supported by qualitative narrative and quantitative data. The A-SMYLE Program Office will supply quarterly report guidelines. The recipient organization should conduct surveys or otherwise seek information on the following topics from parties involved in the placements:

- Student achievements;
- Specialized trainings and/or workshops;
- Program impact on schools, host families, and communities;
- Specific challenges and their solutions;
- Monitoring students, host families, and local coordinators; and
- Ongoing evaluation of program success in achieving stated objectives.

The recipient organization must submit to the program officer and the grants officer a hard copy original plus ***one*** copy of all quarterly performance reports no more than 30 days after the reporting period end dates: September 30, December 31, March 31, and June 30, unless the recipient organization has specified alternative quarterly reporting dates in its application. A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet must be submitted with all performance reports, including the SF-PPR-E and SF-PPR-F. Quarterly reports may also be submitted

electronically to the Grants Office (ReportsECA@state.gov) and to the Program Office (SchulzAJ@state.gov).

***Final Performance Report:*** The recipient organization must submit to the program office, as well as the grants office, a hard copy original plus ***one*** copy of a final performance report. This report must include a program and financial report and should include both qualitative and quantitative data to indicate strengths and weaknesses of the exchanges and placements of all A-SMYLE participants. A SF-PPR, “Performance Progress Report” Cover Sheet must be submitted with the final performance report, including the SF-PPR-E and SF-PPR-F.

***Performance Report Summary Document:*** In addition to Final Performance Report identified above, the recipient organization is required to submit concise one-page documents summarizing their performance reports, and listing and describing their grant activities and a list of their directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees). ECA will transmit these two documents to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA). As required by FFATA reporting requirements, this information will be available to the public via OMB’s USASpending.gov website.

### **13. Evaluation**

The Bureau expects applicants to track host families and other key participants and to develop an evaluation plan to measure gains in mutual understanding.

Applicants must include in their proposals a plan for evaluating program success and in performing the enumerated responsibilities necessary to achieve the program objectives in such a way that they were able to reach the stated outcomes. Evaluation mechanisms should track progress during the program (e.g., on a per-participant and per-activity basis) and, at the end of the program, to assess the cumulative effect of all aspects of the participants’ exchange experiences (e.g., activities, host family selection, contacts with local coordinators) over which the recipient organization had control. Evaluation techniques may be in any form such as a survey or questionnaire, and applicants should include a description of their evaluation methodologies along with a draft of their plans.

Plans should also address the appropriate timing of data collection for each level of outcome. For example, satisfaction is usually captured as a short-term outcome, whereas behavior and institutional changes are normally considered longer-term outcomes.

Overall, the quality of an evaluation plan depends on how well it specifies intended outcomes, clearly defines outcome measurement techniques, identifies timing of outcome measurement, and clearly describes data collection strategies for each outcome (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups). Evaluation plans that deal with all levels of outcomes will be deemed more competitive.

The recipient organization must include the results of ongoing evaluation plans in their quarterly reports, with the final quarterly report summarizing the overall program success. Applicants must maintain all data collected, including survey responses and contact information, for a minimum of three years following completion of each participant's exchange visitor program.

#### **14. Department of State Web Resources**

**Outreach Resources:** During the cooperative agreement period, the Bureau may develop hosting resources to assist the recipient organization with hosting outreach, and to promote A-SMYLE as a U.S. Department of State program. The recipient organization is expected to support promotional campaigns by providing information to ECA and updating promotional materials as needed.

**Online Communities:** All award recipient staff, program personnel, and regional and local volunteers associated with A-SMYLE are expected to be knowledgeable of the Department of State's resources such as but not limited to [ExchangesConnect.State.gov](http://ExchangesConnect.State.gov) and [Alumni.State.gov](http://Alumni.State.gov), and to register as members or guest members of the websites.

Staff and coordinator training as well as orientations for students and host families are to include presentations and demonstrations on these resources.

Department of State Resource sites are to be promoted effectively to participants and participants are to be expected to become active members at these sites. While organizations may provide their own resources and on-line opportunities, these additional online resources may not replace involvement with Department of State online communities.

## **II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES**

### **A-SMYLE Participants**

A-SMYLE participants are 15-17 years old. Under the terms of their visas, they must return to their home countries following the conclusion of their exchange programs in the United States and reside for two years in their home country before they are eligible for certain other visa categories. The recipient organization is expected to assist the State Department in conveying the importance of this physical presence requirement, as ECA considers the two-year period to be a capstone of the exchange experience.

Participants must be secondary school students in their home countries and have not completed more than ten years of primary and secondary education. They must have the ability to speak English at the standard required by U.S. school districts for foreign exchange student admission, without recourse to remedial ESL instruction, demonstrate leadership potential and skills, and

possess the personality traits, maturity, and social skills necessary to adjust to the host environment.

The Department of State seeks to include students of diverse national, ethnic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds, and students with disabilities from Serbia and Montenegro. Participants will be selected for the program on the basis of merit. Finalists will undergo rigorous medical screening. Specifically, the selection criteria are achievement, social skills, and personality factors. Applicants will be evaluated on their English language proficiency.

### **Clustering**

Because students should be placed where they will be most warmly welcomed and accommodated, and where they may contribute to the broadest possible understanding of their cultures, the Department encourages placements in all 50 states and the District of Columbia in a wide range of rural, urban, and suburban settings. A strong overall preference is given to organizations that choose to cluster all or most of their students. A cluster is defined as a minimum of three ECA-funded scholarship students (FLEX, YES, A-SMYLE, and CBYX students) who live within 120 miles of a local coordinator or representative, and can be brought together for activities arranged for all scholarship students in the area, such as orientations, re-entry training, and program-specific enhancement activities.

Applicants are expected to cluster a minimum of 60% of its placements and disperse the remainder throughout the country. Different local representatives may monitor students within an area so long as the students can be brought together for activities as described above. Plans proposing this option must describe in detail how the recipient organization would accomplish this goal.

Applicants selecting the dispersal option for any of their students must describe in detail in the proposal narrative how they will ensure that local staff and volunteers are trained to deal with the specific needs and concerns of this specialized population of exchange students, such as orientation, participant monitoring and enhancement activities.

### **Timetable**

The recruitment and selection process must be completed by February 15, 2013, so that finalist applications can be disseminated for placing the students in host families and schools. Travel to the United States is expected to take place in August 2013. Return travel will occur in May-June 2014. All components should be planned in accordance with the dates and deadlines set by the needs of the program (*e.g.*, the date by which students need to apply for passports, the timing of arrival in the host families, the conclusion of the school year).

### **ECA Activities and Responsibilities**

In a cooperative agreement, ECA is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. ECA activities and responsibilities for the A-SMYLE Program include:

- Providing advice and assistance in the execution of all program components.

- Serving as liaison between the award recipients and personnel within the Department of State, including ECA, the regional bureaus, and overseas posts.
- Monitoring and evaluating the program and its participants through communication by email, phone, and site visits.
- Issuing DS-2019 forms for the participants. All participants will travel on a U.S. government designation for the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program.
- Creating and updating SEVIS status; maintaining all SEVIS records.
- Hosting an annual meeting for all award recipients to provide program guidance.
- Approving program promotional materials and website information.
- Representing the U.S. Government as the program sponsor at exchange events, program events, and orientations.
- Publicizing program highlights and responding to Congressional and Department requests for information.

### **III. PROPOSAL CONTENTS**

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since applicants do not have the opportunity to meet with reviewing officials or otherwise discuss the merits of their applications, proposals should describe a program in a convincing and comprehensive manner, addressing all the criteria set forth in the RFGP and POGI, and the other guidelines identified in the introduction to this document.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements. Proposals may be submitted through Grants.gov only in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text (less preferable) or
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following information:

#### ***TAB A - Application for Federal Assistance Cover Sheet (SF-424)***

Applications must include a completed “Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424). You must obtain a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to complete

Box 8(c) of the Form SF-424. You may obtain DUNS numbers at no charge by contacting Dun and Bradstreet at <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com> or 1-866-705-5711.

***TAB B - Executive Summary***

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

- Name of the organization submitting the proposal and participating organizations, if applicable
- Beginning and ending dates of the program
- Scope and Goals
  - Number and description of participants
  - Geographic diversity of the program, both U.S. and overseas
  - Method of placement
  - Nature of activities
  - Anticipated results (short and long-term)
- Funding level requested from the Bureau
  - Total program cost
  - Total cost sharing from applicant and other sources
  - Total per-student cost

***TAB C***

***Calendar of Activities/Itinerary  
Narrative***

*Calendar of activities/itinerary*

The Calendar of Activities/Itinerary is a monthly plan of action or timetable that demonstrates the timing and organization of the responsibilities of the recipient organization. These should include, but not be limited to, monitoring local staff, A-SMYLE students, and host families; training events; submission of quarterly reports; and dispersal of funds and information. This is not part of the page limit on the Program Narrative, discussed below.

*Narrative*

In up to 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the responsibilities outlined in the “Statement of Work” and all matters covered under the “Program Specific Guidelines,” with extra attention given to the monitoring section.

The Program Narrative may be divided into sub-headings as follows:

1. Vision/Goals
  - a. Objectives (as set forth in the RFGP)
  - b. Outcomes (as set forth in the RFGP)
2. Participating Organizations (if applicable)



3. Organizational Structure and Capacity
  - a. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program objectives and outcomes.
  - b. Resources, expertise, and experience should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program objectives and outcomes.
  - c. Identification of headquarters staff responsible for program implementation.
  - d. Percentage of time headquarters staff will dedicate to the A-SMYLE program.
  - e. Identification of field staff:
    - i. Status as full-time, part-time, or third parties (paid or volunteer) and percentage of time dedicated to the A-SMYLE program
    - ii. Reporting structure (both in field and to headquarters)
  - f. Identification of subcontractors or implementing partners, if applicable, and description of their activities.
  - g. For past recipients of Department of State Grants and/or for designated sponsors of the Exchange Visitor Program, institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and record of compliance with reporting and regulatory requirements.
  - h. For new applicants, demonstrate capacity and ability to participate in the Program, including:
    - i. Financial viability
    - ii. At least four years of experience in the area of international exchange
4. Program Activities
  - a. Advertisement
  - b. Recruitment – Briefly describe the recruitment process, including the plan for scheduling the various stages of application and their locations. A copy of the participant application should be included as an attachment. Provide your work plan/timeframe for recruitment/selection activities.
  - c. Selection - Briefly describe the selection process, including your plan for recruitment and training of application reviewers. Explain how you will ensure that finalists represent a diverse cross-section of each country.
  - d. Placement
  - e. Orientation
  - f. Enhancement Activities, including Civic Education Week
5. Program Participant Monitoring
  - a. Field staff
    - i. Plans for recruiting, screening, selecting, and supporting local coordinators
    - ii. Plans for supporting and monitoring local coordinators
      1. Clustered students
      2. Dispersed students
  - b. Host families

- i. Plans for recruiting, screening, selecting, supporting, and monitoring host families: Include selection criteria to be used for evaluating the suitability of host families with respect to each of the regulatory requirements: interview; adequate financial resources to undertake hosting obligations; reputation and character through character references, criminal background checks; and capacity to provide a comfortable and nurturing home environment.
    - ii. Details about the host family interview, home visit, and ongoing monitoring for both clustered and dispersed students
  - c. Program participants: Plans for placing, supporting, and monitoring students
  - d. Checks and Balances and Contingency Plans with regard to participant monitoring at all levels (Field staff, host families, and students)
  - e. Plans for the following activities and responsibilities
    - i. Implementing and monitoring mandated community service activities
    - ii. Observation of International Education Week
    - iii. Provision of scholarships and other incentives that offer skill development opportunities
    - iv. Orientation and Re-entry Training
      - 1. Plans and schedule for post-arrival, mid-program, and re-entry orientations
      - 2. Include explanation of how the topic of alumni programming will be incorporated into sessions
  - f. Plan for school placements
    - i. Assurance that placements will be secured in writing prior to students' arrival
    - ii. Confirmation that placements will be in accredited schools only
    - iii. Mandatory subject classes
    - iv. Monitoring student progress, activities, and special achievements
  - g. Plan for staff training
    - i. National training date and location
    - ii. Regional and local training strategies
    - iii. Initial training for new staff and ongoing training for seasoned staff
    - iv. Methods of training staff who work with dispersed students
  - h. Plan for accommodating and recruiting a student with a disability
  - i. Disbursal of funds
    - i. Incidentals Allowance
    - ii. Monthly Stipends
    - iii. Enhancements
- 6. Diversity
  - a. Substantive support of the Bureau's Guidelines set forth in the RFGP
  - b. Diversity should be reflected in the achievable and relevant features of:

- i. Program administration (e.g., selection of participants, host families, schools, program venue, and program evaluation)
  - ii. Program content (e.g., orientations, program meetings, resource materials, and follow-up activities)
- 7. Multiplier Effect
  - a. Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding
  - b. Innovative ideas to expose American communities to the goals and activities of the A-SMYLE Program involving students, host families, and schools, such as:
    - i. Media outreach
    - ii. Visits to local and national government representatives
    - iii. Internet-based applications
  - c. Substantive plans to prepare A-SMYLE students for their roles as active, effective A-SMYLE alumni
- 8. Follow-On Activities
  - a. Plans for continued follow-on activities
  - b. Strategy for continued contact with alumni from previous years and reinforcement of skills and knowledge acquired through the program
  - c. Plans to use alumni in recruitment and outreach
- 9. Reporting and Evaluation
 

Plan to track and evaluate program success in meeting the objectives and outcomes as well as the enumerated responsibilities.

  - a. Evaluations should be ongoing and at program end
  - b. Evaluations should monitor individual students and individual activities
  - c. Proposals should also specify ways in which students will be encouraged to complete surveys
  - d. Provide samples of all monitoring and evaluation plans in Tab E
- 10. Health and Accident Insurance
  - a. Identify the insurance plan and coverage provided to A-SMYLE students
  - b. If plan is other than ASPE
    - i. Provide cost comparisons
    - ii. Provide explanation of benefits of alternative plan
- 11. Program Management
  - a. Describe overseas infrastructure, including number of offices, locations, and how they are/will be staffed and equipped
  - b. Day-to-day operations
  - c. Communication with sub-recipient organization(s) (if applicable)
- 12. Information Management
  - a. Tracking applicants through program stages

- b. Prepare and electronically transmit data needed for the Bureau program office to issue DS-2019 forms
- c. Continually maintain a database on current students while they are in the United States

***TAB D - Budget Submission***

Applicants must submit a Form SF-424A along with a comprehensive line item budget. The budget must include and distinguish between funds requested under this RFGP and funds applicants acquire through cost-sharing or from other sources. You must submit a Program Activity Cost Summary. Include an explanatory budget narrative and submit per participant and total costs. Per participant costs are calculated as the total Cooperative Agreement funds requested divided by the number of participants.

All budgets will be reviewed for cost-efficiency, including the percentage of the Cooperative Agreement that will be used for administrative expenses. The recipient organization will be responsible for managing fiscal data and accounting for funding, as required by federal law, including cost-sharing and funds provided to approved sub-recipient organization(s).

Each budget must include the following costs:

- Overseas infrastructure costs
- Overseas recruitment costs
- International travel costs
- Selection costs
- Student-specific costs
  - \$1,500 for an Independence Program student
  - \$125 per student monthly stipend for 11 months for social activities and personal items (e.g., movie and pizza with friends, toiletries, haircut)
  - \$300 reimbursable per student incidentals allowance to be spent by the host family for school start-up costs and other school-related expenses (e.g., yearbook, locker fees, gym shorts) for which receipts must be presented to the recipient organization. If additional school expenses, such as book fees are anticipated, they may be included as an additional line item.
  - \$100 per student emergency expense fund to be retained by the organization for small emergency expenses (e.g., eyeglasses, minor dental problems)
  - \$400 per student for enhancement activities
  - Screening of potential host family members (criminal background checks)
  - Accident and Sickness insurance – include premiums in the budget as a Cooperative Agreement-funded line item if you are opting for a private insurance plan
- Civic Education Workshop costs

- Support and monitoring of regional and local staff; include support for spot-checks of a minimum of 20% or 10 (whichever is greater) of A-SMYLE students.
- Staff travel, including expenses for at least one trip for one person to Washington, D.C. to attend the two-day annual meeting organized by ECA's Youth Programs Division.

Budgets also typically include but are not necessarily limited to the following items:

- National and regional coordinator trainings;
- Orientations (post-arrival, mid-program, and re-entry) for students and host families;
- Stipends and honoraria for non-salaried staff and volunteers;
- Identifying, screening (e.g., criminal background checks and interviewing), and selecting host families;
- Monitoring students and host families, trouble-shooting, counseling, and resettling students, as necessary;
- Student activities including specialized training and workshops;
- Implementing community service activities;
- Program materials (including an explanation of how materials will be used);
- Administrative costs (e.g., salaries, communication, and supplies);
- Promotional materials, including website development;
- Mandatory school fees, including registration and books; and
- Program-related initiatives, such as scholarships to participate in leadership training events and other incentives.

#### *Cost sharing*

All cost sharing declared in the proposal budget must be auditable. Cost-sharing and enhancement of the basic package provided by the Bureau is strongly encouraged. Private partnerships with corporations or foundations are encouraged. Direct contributions from the applicant organization itself are welcome, both cash and in-kind (e.g., indirect costs). Costs borne by host families are considered "in-kind contributions" and may not be declared as a cost share item.

**The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and availability of funds.**

#### ***TAB E***

Resumes of all program staff should be included in the submission. No resume should exceed two pages. Include additional illustrative information and data that will strengthen and provide additional detail to the application, e.g., copies of detailed participant monitoring and project evaluation plans, letters of endorsement, and commitments from all implementing partners or subcontractors.

***TAB F - SF-424B, "Assurances – Non-construction Programs," First Time Applicant Documents, and Additional documentation***

First time applicant organizations and each organization which has not received an assistance award (grant or cooperative agreement) from the Bureau during the past three (3) years, must submit a copy of its Charter or Articles of Incorporation and a list of its current Board of Directors.

All applicants must submit the following documents: a Form SF-424B (“Assurances – Non-construction Programs”); the most recent audited financial statements; and, for those organizations that have filed a Form 990, the Form 990 that corresponds to the period covered by the financial statements.

The Bureau retains the right to ask for additional documentation of those items included on these forms. Forms should be included at Tab F.

*Officers, Trustees, and Key Employees:* Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their applications the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). Applicants that have obtained exempt status but not yet filed a Form 990 must provide the portions of Form 1023 that identify these individuals.

*Other Documents:* Applicants should limit their additional documents to those that are essential for understanding the organization and its approach to fulfilling the program. Do not include orientation manuals or other printed materials.

#### **IV. REVIEW PROCESS**

Your proposal will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines. Details on the review process and criteria are provided in the RFGP.

#### **V. APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

The Solicitation Package provides detailed instructions regarding the shipment and deadline for submission of a proposal. The RFGP indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which applicants must submit their proposals. **There are no exceptions to this deadline.** For further information, contact the A-SMYLE Program Officer Amy Schulz ([SchulzAJ@state.gov](mailto:SchulzAJ@state.gov), 202-632-6052), Office of Citizen Exchanges, ECA/PE/C/PY, SA-5, Floor 3, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20037.